

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 24 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In the present specific embodiment, the quarter-wave plate 20 is implemented via a first eighth-wave plate 40 in line with a second eighth-wave plate 42. The eighth-wave plates 40, 42 have circular perforations 44 extending completely therethrough. The dimensions and spacing of the circular perforations 44 are optimized to convert an input horizontally-polarized beam (see beam 18 of Fig. 1) into the circularly-polarized output beam 22 and are optimized to convert the reflected circularly-polarized beam 26 into the vertically-polarized beam 30, which reflects from the beamsplitter 16. The exact dimensions and spacing of the circular perforations 44 are application-specific and may be changed in accordance with properties of the electromagnetic energy for which the isolator 12 will be used. The construction of a suitable quarter-wave plate is also discussed in co-pending U.S. Patent Application, Serial No. 10/231937, entitled VARIABLE QUASIOPTICAL WAVE PLATE AND METHOD OF MAKING (Atty. Docket No. PD02W052), now U.S. Pat. No. 6,693,605, assigned to the assignee of the present invention and incorporated by reference herein. While in the present specific embodiment, the quarter-wave plate 20 is implemented via two eighth-wave plates 40, 42, one skilled in the art may implement the quarter-wave plate as a single plate perforated by an array of rectangular slots.